

Wheeler Center

Alt. name: Brewster Center

Address: 637 Brewster

Local

State v 3/2/76

State Marker v 8/24/78

National



Wheeler Center, 2003



Historic Overview:

In 1919 Leon "Toy" Wheeler of Indianapolis, Indiana, became the first black recreation worker employed by the City of Detroit. Seven years later the Detroit Recreation Department acquired a building at Vernor Highway and Hastings Street, which Wheeler managed. Knowledge of sports and leadership qualities mad him an excellent choice for the job. In high school Wheeler had received four sports awards and then went on to become an outstanding college athlete. Wheeler was in charge of the Brewster Center, which opened in this two-story red brick building. Featuring a well-rounded athletic program, the center made significant progress in basketball, swimming, tennis, boxing and other sports. Today this organization known as the Wheeler Center is a pioneer in programs for the elderly.

Text as written on Michigan Historical Marker.

